

The EU policy towards the dissolution of Yugoslavia Special emphasis on the EU policy towards the Republic of Macedonia

By Dejan Marolov

Abstract

This paper analyzes the EU policy towards the disintegration of Yugoslavia and its success i.e. failure in terms of predefined and publicly promoted goals. In this context, the EU politics towards Macedonia during the Yugoslav crisis are specifically analyzed. Positions of certain - EU member states, especially Britain, France and Germany are part of the analysis too. Inevitably this paper treats the Common Foreign and Security Policy, as one of the Union's pillars introduced by the Maastricht Treaty from 1992. This survey uses relevant literature as well as analysis of certain acts. The research concludes that the EU politics of dealing with the situation in Yugoslavia was generally unsuccessful and EU policy towards Macedonia during the period of the Yugoslav crisis was quite controversial. Analyzing the degree of success / failure of EU policy towards dealing with the Yugoslav issue is significant in terms of analyzing the real capacity of the Union of this time period about realization of the promoted ambitions of becoming world's political player. The EU policy towards Macedonia in this time is very important and has its influence on the contemporary relations between Macedonia and EU. Through the representation of the Macedonia - EU relationship during the Yugoslav crisis, this research attempts to present the rudiments of a separate Macedonian foreign policy and to give explanations of certain problems in their relationships.

Key words: Disintegration of Yugoslavia, EU policies, Macedonia, Greece.

1. Introduction

This paper consists of two main and supplementary parts. The first one examines the politics of EU towards the disintegration of the former Yugoslav federation. The second one deals with the EU policy specifically towards Macedonia during the Yugoslav crisis. The way of setting up the skeleton of this paper is due to the cause - effect relationship of EU policy towards Yugoslavia and EU policy towards Macedonia. So mostly through the method of deduction the general policy of the EU towards Yugoslavia is analyzed in order to find appropriate EU policy towards Macedonia. The analysis of EU policy towards Yugoslavia provides possibilities for analysis of change of the balance and restructuring of power in Europe in the initial period after the Cold War. In this direction in the first part are processed the relevant policies of the three most powerful European countries UK, France and Germany. Their individual policies are processed in the context of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of EU and the implications on it. Furthermore, the paper elaborates the relation between the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the CFSP of the EU as response to the Yugoslav crisis.

As part of the former Yugoslav federation, Republic of Macedonia was treated as part of an overall EU policy towards Yugoslavia, but of course with existence of specific elements and issues. Exactly this relationship is part of the analysis of the second part. Through this, the laying of the foundation stone of the Macedonian independent foreign policy will be also presented with the explanation of the roots of some modern issues in the relations between Macedonia and the EU.

2. The EU policies towards the disintegration of Yugoslavia

This section will present the role of EC¹ and the way that the Union has chosen to deal with the biggest war since the World War II on the European continent.

Most of the authors generally consider that the EU did not deal well with the Yugoslav crisis and that in most of the time just seemed like paralyzed and powerless observer. This section will be started with Pond² according to whom the dissolution of the state was a tragedy for both, Yugoslavia itself and Europe. The previous sentence may sound a bit confusing and opens several dilemmas. It is clear that the way the disintegration of Yugoslavia happened was undoubtedly tragic for Yugoslavia, but why would this be also a tragedy for Europe? Have Europe done enough to prevent this tragedy and whether it was obliged to do anything at all? We believe that the initial quoted sentence of this section is entirely correct. The dissolution of Yugoslavia was equally tragic for Europe (i.e. EU) as well as for Yugoslavia itself. Namely, after half a century repetition of the phrase “never again Auschwitz” new camps have emerged on the

¹ In that time still European Community.

² Elizabeth Pond, *Endgame in the Balkans, regime change, European style*. (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2006).

territory of Europe. The passivity of EU, but also of the entire international community in general, can be illustrated through the example of Srebrenica. We can say that EU remained paralyzed and practically just watched as the Bosnian war took over 100,000 (including many civilian) victims and more than 1.8 million displaced.

However, maybe someone will claim that this war was not a war of the EU, and accordingly the EU did not have to do anything about it. We do not agree with this assertion. EU had to do more, if not for moral reasons, then because of the fact that one of the EU's three main pillars is the common foreign and security policy. This pillar policy had long-term goals for making EU a visible player in international relations. However, the case of the breakup of Yugoslavia inevitably posed the dilemma whether it is possible for the Union to be a world player when it cannot deal with the problems in its own backyard?

The breakup of Yugoslavia was a tragedy for Europe, which failed on the moral test in one hand, but on the other hand this was also a terrible start of the common foreign and security policy project. But, why was this the case? To answer this question we must go back in the early 1990s and analyze the reasons for such behavior of the EU. Simply put, Europe was busy with itself. In 1991 its member states set ambitious goals for the future of the then European Community. They began with the process of transformation in the European Union and also the process of creating a common European currency. But the member states were also busy with themselves. The German government acknowledged that the process of unification of both blocs of Germany will be a process that is terribly costly³. In 1993 the common European market finally entered into force, but the German economy was still weak. On the other hand, France and Great Britain did not look too favorably on the German unification. Part of the French political elites were not happy that after a half-century Germany will again be a strong state with full sovereignty, and somehow did not like the fact that the days when France was the only continental power with its own sector in Berlin are definitely over. Certainly we should not forget the whole context of the Post-Cold War period, which brought completely new rules. For example, France and Britain entered the Post-Cold War period as nuclear powers. When the cold war was over their nuclear weapons became too expensive and politically not very useful. Furthermore the trend of budget cuts of their own armies and the redirection of this money into domestic projects have become generally accepted for all EU members. Therefore none of the EU countries like the idea for re-allocated funds from the budgets for military purposes once the cold war was over.

However these were not the only reasons. The existence of different national interests and visions for the future of Yugoslavia was another important reason. This situation is reflected in the failure to build a common foreign and security policy towards the Yugoslav issue. If we consider the foreign policies of the three most powerful states in the EU, regarding the Yugoslav crisis, we can see the following.

For the German foreign policy, we can say that it was supporting the creating of independent states of Slovenia and Croatia, and with this, the end of Yugoslavia or an end to the great Serbian

³About 100 billion dollars yearly were being used for equalization between the West and East German economy.

projects, according to the German policy views. So the German foreign policy was quite active in the field of providing support for Croatia and Slovenia on the one hand and accusation for the outbreak of conflict to Serbia, on other.

Unlike Germany, the UK in its policy towards the Yugoslav issue was not creating such black and white picture of what was happening there. Thus, unlike Germany, the UK was not so favored of the creation of independent states of Slovenia and Croatia, and did not see Serbia as the only initiator of the war. According to the UK policy, there cannot be only one responsible for the outbreak of the conflict, and in accordance with this view, all the sides were equally guilty. According to certain authors⁴ UK had developed tactic by which an action by the West is not necessary good because what was going on in Yugoslavia would inevitably result in a war between the Balkan “tribes” and finally with the creation of one hegemony (Serbian) which Britain would later easily handle ...”*To justify their inaction, statesmen and diplomats chose to interpret the war as a peculiarly Balkan phenomenon. It was allegedly the result of ancient and irrational animosities, inherent in Balkan peoples, who had seemingly been at each others’ throats since time immemorial and were all as bad as each other.*”⁵. It seems that the use of terminology like “Balkan tribes” had specific role in creating a kind of justification why UK should stay out of the Yugoslav war. Opposite of this it would be also both military and economically costly.

The French foreign policy toward Yugoslavia was much closer to the UK policy rather than to the German. Thus, France in a way was still seeing Serbia as its ally from the Balkans and therefore opposed any position by which they were the only solely responsible side for the war. Similar to the UK, France too, chose to have a passive view by which the West should not interfere too much in Yugoslavia. This would have meant a swift victory of the Serbian forces to the rest of Yugoslavia. France did not look favorably toward the creation of an independent Croatia and Slovenia as well. This France - UK policy reflected in the Security Council where the only thing they were willing to do about Yugoslavia was the introduction of sanctions on imports of arms for entire Yugoslavia. By this, they have indirectly helped the Serbs and the Yugoslav People’s Army (YNA), which was mostly under Serbian control and which already owned the bulk of existing weapons.

Some of the reasons for these France-UK positions could be searched in some fears that may exist concerning the recent unification of Germany which once again, was becoming one of the most powerful European states. This was used from the Serbian propaganda according to which Germany was working on its fourth Reich that under its control would have the territory from the Baltic to the Adriatic. Such claims were exaggeration of reality, but definitely, Germany had a particular interest in recognition of Croatian and Slovenian independence and by this an end to the existence of Yugoslavia. Certainly whether these fears were justified or not, rational or not,

⁴ Elizabeth Pond, *Endgame in the Balkans, regime change, European style*. (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2006).

⁵ Christopher Bennett, *Yugoslav bloody collapse. Causes, Course and Consequences* (New York: University Press Washington Square, 1995), P 194.

had some degree of truth in the formation of the foreign policy of UK and especially France which in the two world wars was the one of the first that felt the German militarism.

The existence of such different approaches and policies by the three most powerful members of the EU could not result in a creation of a common policy of the EU towards the Yugoslav issue. However, despite the existence of different views, we can still speak about a common position of the EU towards Yugoslavia. EU had a common policy from the period before the referendum in Slovenia until the military intervention from YPA. In the period before the referendum in Slovenia, the policy of the EU was common in a way that ignored the possibility for potential problems, despite the existence of many indications for a possible disaster. However it must be emphasized that this applies only to the policy of the EU because if we claim the same for the individual European powers it would be naive. According to some definitions of foreign policy, even the decision not to do anything is still a foreign policy⁶. Accordingly we believe that ignoring the Yugoslav problem i.e. was actually a decision and a common position in the foreign policy of the EU.

After the referendum for secession in Slovenia, the EU could no longer ignore the potential problem in Yugoslavia. From this point EU changed the direction of its foreign policy from inactive to active. EU based its policy on the territorial integrity principle versus the self-determination principle. According to the principle of territorial integrity, EU initially identified Slovenia and Croatia as a threat to stability and peace in Southeast Europe and the federal government and the YNA as a stabilizing factor. *“In the first such crisis in Europe after the end of the cold war, the EC countries quickly identified two new threats to European stability in Croatia and Slovenia, which they saw as responsible for destabilizing of the new international order in Europe. The communist Yugoslav government and its federal Army, in this view, stood for European stability. This preference for the status quo in the Balkans, even if it meant maintaining a communist government in power against widespread popular resistance, served as the basis for early Western policy towards the breakaway Republics.”*⁷. The reasons for this original and perhaps ironic attitude of EU towards the Yugoslav question can be sought in the fear for possible creation of a vacuum space in Europe. This means that there was a possibility to create a secessionist mess that could not be controlled. The possibility that what happens in Yugoslavia can also be copied in other places too and maybe even to encourage some of this secessionist movements within the EU countries themselves, was the basic fear. However in the same time the possibility for destabilization of Yugoslavia was also a possible refugee problem for the EU. Especially concerned with this was Italy, which shared part of its border with Yugoslavia. In France for example, beside the fear of the separatist movement in Corsica, we should not forget the imperial past of France and its resistance to the colonialism. In support to

⁶The foreign policy is a strategy of approach chosen by the national government to achieve its objectives in relations with external entities. This includes the decision not to do anything. By Steve Smith, Amelia Hadfield, Timothy Dunne (2008).

⁷ Reneo Lukic and Allen Lznch, *Europe from the balkans to the Urals, The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). Page 253.

this is the statement by the French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas “*The recognition of Slovenia and Croatia would mean throwing gasoline on the flames and tomorrow what we will do in Yugoslavia will be done for other cases too.*”⁸. So, these kinds of reasons were the basis for building a common foreign policy towards Yugoslavia based on the support of the principle of territorial integrity. This policy of the EU became crystal clear during the voting on 23 June 1991, just two days before the declaration of independence of Slovenia and Croatia. At this meeting it was unanimously voted that the EU will not recognize the independence of Slovenia and Croatia if they do it unilaterally. Interesting is the fact that Germany too attached itself to this common policy position and despite the possible existence of its different views, did not dare to act unilaterally. Beside this verbal support for the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, Europe offered something else too, but did not achieve the desired effect because it came too late. “(...) *at the end of May, an EC delegation to Belgrade headed by Commission President Jacques Delors promised Prime Minister Ante Markovic generous financial aid if the country remain together, though by this stage Markovic no longer had any influence.*”⁹. Specifically there have been 4 billion dollars of loan offered for stabilization of the Yugoslav economy with a precondition that Yugoslavia remains one country. Yet, apparently, this promise of generous financial aid came too late and had no real influence on the processes of disintegration of the country. As we know, this policy of the EU did not bear fruit and instead of achieving its goal, i.e. survival of the Yugoslav federation or some form of peaceful transformation into a confederation, the Yugoslav state completely disintegrated.

Therefore, already in June Slovenia and Croatia declared independence. After the proclamation of independence YPA made a clumsy military action attacking Slovenia. The result was winning the sympathies of the western public for Slovenia that was opposing the powerful Yugoslav army. Due to the intervention of YPA in Slovenia the EU changed its policy in respect of the principle of territorial integrity.

The YPA intervention referred to an official change in the German policy which replaced the support of the principle of territorial integrity (which was an official policy of the EU) with the open support for the principle of self-determination. At the meeting held on 15 September 1991 in Venice, the foreign ministers of Italy and Germany, for the first time openly mentioned the possibility of recognition of Slovenia and Croatia, despite the positions of the other EU members. Therefore the start of the military conflict in Slovenia was used by Germany to open up the agenda for the possibility for recognition of the secessionist republics. This was justified as the only and unique option in order to preclude the further spillover of the conflict. Those German positions have encouraged some other countries, outside the Union, which shared similar views, but were afraid publicly to say it, in order not to be charged as separatists.

⁸Alan Riding, “European Community freezes arms sales and aid,” *New York times* (1991) accessed January 15, 2010. P 4.

⁹ Christopher Bennett, *Yugoslav bloody collapse. Causes, Course and Consequences* (New York: University Press Washington Square, 1995). P 175.

Primarily this was Austria¹⁰. In the context of its imperial past it must be mentioned that approximately half the territory of Yugoslavia was incorporated in it (i.e. the territories of Slovenia, Croatia and later B&H)¹¹. Another one was Hungary from which the Croatian government secretly purchased weapons for the independence war.

The YPA action was a crucial moment that was the turning point that made the EU common policy toward Yugoslavia nonexistent. The EU found itself divided between the German and the UK-France positions. For this issue France even replaced its traditional EC partner - Germany with the UK. This strong Franco-British couple tried to shape the EU common policy and this was also supported by several EU member states especially Greece, Spain and the Netherlands, while Germany was alone inside the EU defending the self-determination issue. However, Ireland and Denmark had some sympathy to the right for self-determination. With this combination of the power within the EU, we can conclude that the Franco-British couple in a significant extent shaped the overall EU policy towards Yugoslavia. Confirmation of the above is found in the literature that deals with the common foreign and security policy. According to Lukic & Lynch (1996, p.259)¹² *“in sum, France and the UK have been rather successful in shaping the foreign policy of the EC as a whole. Thus the aggregate supranational interest of the EC in the Yugoslav conflict in fact closely reflected the national interests of France and the UK.”* If we just look at the EU diplomats involved directly in the process of the Yugoslavia issue, we will notice that the diplomats were hidden supporters of the national interests of Britain and France. One such example is Lord Carrington. While the German foreign policy blamed the Serbs for the war, the British and French foreign policy saw all sides as equally guilty. Therefore Lord Carrington (Carrington 1995) was against what he called black and white picture and considered that the Serbs have a case in point too. The very statement is in the context of the UK and France positions.

With the existence of such divisions within the EU, it became virtually impossible for the EU to undertake any serious actions about the situation in Yugoslavia. However, one thing was commonly accepted by all sides (inside EU and even from USA), and that was the definition of the Yugoslav problem as a European problem. For this attitude largely contributed the pressure created in the media but also by the USA which refused to engage into the direct resolution of the Yugoslavian issue in its early stages. In a situation in which we have de facto military conflict on the Yugoslav territory, particularly in Slovenia, with realistic chances to expand, the EU sends a mission in Yugoslavia. *“After talks with the federal and republic’s leadership, the EC delegation obtained a cease-fire on 28 June 1991, ending troop movement by all sides. The EC delegation pressured Croatia and Slovenia to suspend their declarations of independence for three months. The EC delegation also extracted an agreement from Milosevic to withdraw his*

¹⁰ Austria joined the EU in 1995.

¹¹ The Austro-Hungarian Empire 1867-1918.

¹² Reneo Lukic and Allen Lznch, *Europe from the balkans to the Urals, The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

veto of the Croatian leader Stipe Mesic as the new (and duly scheduled) chairman of Yugoslavia's collective Presidency"¹³.

Let us analyze what were the main objectives of the EU with this mission. The first objective was obviously an immediate ceasefire and the second goal was an attempt to preserve the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia through the resurrection of the Yugoslav federal presidency as one of the most important federal institutions. The meeting was held in Croatia, where the Croats and the Slovenes accepted to put their declarations of independence on hold three months and the federal Army accepted the three months cease-fire in Slovenia. The three-month cease-fire plan according to the EU was enough time for the peaceful discussions without violence to take place. After this, Jacques Poos, the foreign Minister of Luxembourg ("The Death of Yugoslavia" 1995) declared that the main goal of the mission has been achieved – immediate ceasefire and stopping of the further escalations.

The facts given in the literature are divided over whether this mission was a success or not. We are more sympathetic to the second view and justify it with the fact that the long-term EU goal i.e. stopping the further escalation of the situation has not been accomplished. This is so because the fires very soon expanded in to the territories of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H). So the statements of certain politicians, declaring great success of EU, were simply premature. Still, it is not denied that by cooperating with the EU, Slovenia became an independent state. At the same time, this success is not glorified, taking into account the fact that Slovenia was not in the sphere of interest of Serbia and it was relatively easily allowed to leave Yugoslavia.

After the expiration of two months from the Jacques Poos statement in which he declared success of the EU mission, the war started to move in Croatia and the tensions in B&H were growing. In response to the Yugoslav tinderbox, EU organized a conference under the bat of Lord Carrington¹⁴. It is significant that this Hague Peace Conference had approach to Yugoslavia as a whole instead of dealing with the crisis areas happening on the ground. At the conference there were representatives of all Yugoslav nations and nationalities, including Albanians of Kosovo and Vojvodina's Hungarians. This conference represented a new stage in the EU approach to the Yugoslav question. Until this moment the EU enforced ad hoc tactics for solving current problems as the conflict in Slovenia. However, from this moment its strategy changed and put all Yugoslav problems on the table for discussion. This approach was considered as more appropriate because the instability and the tensions were overlooked all over Yugoslavia and partial solving was unable to extinguish the whole fire. Still this concept had a too ambitious goal. The decision suggested was peaceful transformation of the Yugoslav federation in some sort of loose confederation consisting of autonomic republics and a peaceful transformation of the previous republic borders into inter-state borders. This solution was accepted by all the republics except Serbia.

¹³ Reneo Lukic and Allen Lznch, *Europe from the balkans to the Urals, The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). P 256.

¹⁴ Former general NATO secretary and former British foreign secretary.

Soon it became perfectly clear that without a solid military support this kind of peace conference cannot be considered for anything more than a round table. The EU attempts to conclude new ceasefire were not respected on the ground. Furthermore this led to the question about the actual capabilities and instruments of the EU. If the military capabilities of member states were considered then the following conclusion could be drawn. EU had no defense and military organization counterpart of the NATO pact¹⁵. Although there were certain attempts for the creation of a common EU defense army, all these projects failed as too ambitious. The only common defense alliance that EU countries have been in and are in is NATO. But in NATO the main player was AND IS the USA, which apparently had no intention to intervene in the Yugoslav war at this early stage. On the other side, the EU itself, with the exception of France and Britain, had no military basis for such a major operation as the intervention in the Yugoslav wars. It should be mentioned that Germany had the necessary capacity but this was not possible in accordance with its post World War II Constitution. So we can conclude that the situation with the military capacity of the EU-NATO looked like this - there was no will for NATO to intervene. The two EU countries that had military and financial capacity for intervention (France and UK) refused to do it, while Germany, which possessed the capacity to intervene could not do it and all the other EU members simply did not have the capacity to do so.

If the EU was unwilling or unable to use military methods, then which were the available instruments of the EU? As we already mentioned, there was an offer for financial help to Yugoslavia if the country stayed together. The use of the instruments of economic character is not something that is unseen in the EU tactics and is part of the so-called policy of 'stick and carrot'. In this concrete situation it would have meant that if Yugoslavia remained together or peacefully transformed into a loose federation, than it would get the "carrot" – great financial assistance. On the other hand, the stick was – not signing any new trade agreements, suspension of existing treaties agreements, introduction of economic sanctions against Yugoslavia etc. The use of the financial instrument as a tool for persuasion seemed very logical, especially due to the fact that the European Communities were the largest trading partner of Yugoslavia. That is why this approach should have been used much earlier. Unfortunately at the moment when the EU began to use this instrument it was unable to produce any important effects, because in those moments the nationalism in Yugoslavia was already irreversibly inflamed.

It seems that in those moments much more effective EU instrument had political rather than economic character. The political power of the EU arose mainly from the power of its members to recognize or not the new states. Recognition of the independence of Slovenia and Croatia on the one hand or their non-recognition on the other hand, was the instrument that the EU had in conducting various negotiations with them. The same instrument was applied for the Serbs too, thus the recognition or not of the parts that are seceding from Yugoslavia was used as a means to made the Serbs negotiate. Overall, the policy of the EU was not much more successful in terms

¹⁵With exception of the WEU (Western European Union) which is non-functional. – IT IS ACTUALLY INCORPORATED INTO EU TODAY, THUS NON EXISTANT, NOT NON-FUNCTIONAL. WEU WAS USED FOR BLOCKING WEAPONS SELLING IN THE SEA DURING THE WARS OF INDEPENDENCE.

of dealing with the war in B&H, although at the moment, EU already had Slovenia and Croatia as an experience. When it became obvious that the tensions in B&H can escalate into a real war, EU organized and mediated a meeting¹⁶ between Radovan Karadzic, Mate Boban and Alija Izetbegovic – the leaders and representatives of the three communities in B&H. The EU mediator presented his plan for reconstruction of B&H into a three regions with great autonomy. According to the plan each region would have a majority of one of the existing three nations in the Republic. All regions would have had an equal role in the central government in Sarajevo. Regarding the external borders it was stressed that they will remain the same, which practically meant that secession and annexation of parts of B&H towards the neighboring countries would not be possible. However, the B&H design presented at the Lisbon meeting was not supported by the Bosniak side, along with the United States, which considered that this agreement opens the door to divide the country. After the collapse of this meeting, the violence irreversibly started in B&H, after which EU withdrew its observers from the ground. This initial failure is also repeated in the next steps that will be undertaken by EU in order to resolve the Bosnian issue.

In August 1992 the EU together with the United Nations organized the London conference with a working agenda dedicated to Yugoslavia. During this conference, some basic positions for the solution of the Bosnian war have been set up. It was said that any solution for B&H must respect its external borders, non-recognition of the territory acquired by the use of force etc. These positions were the basis for the work of the International Conference on Former Yugoslavia held in Geneva in September 1992. Namely, on this conference the first version of the Vance-Owen plan was drafted. This plan suggested creation of 10 provinces in B&H, which although they would have been ethnically heterogeneous, they would also have a clear majority from one of the three communities living in B&H. For Sarajevo was suggested to be a separate province and Capital which would also reflect the multiethnic character of B&H. Official proponents of the plan were the EU and UN. This plan was signed in May 1993 by all warring sides. What initially seemed like a great success and possibility for peace in B&H very soon turned out into complete failure. Thus, although the plan was originally signed by the Bosnian Serbs, it still was not ratified in the Parliament of the self-declared Serbian Republic of B&H. This event represented a key challenge for the EU. The Union was in a position to demonstrate whether it has a credibility to implement what it had proposed and was accepted by all parties. Eventually the Parliament of the Republic of Srpska did not give its ratification to the peace plan. After this event the EU was unable to implement the plan and with this in a way recognized the self-proclaimed Republic of Srpska acknowledging the decision of its institutions.

In terms of the conflicting interests within the Union, i.e. the France-British couple on one hand and Germany on the other hand, it could be concluded as a sort of victory for Germany. This is confirmed by the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia by the members of the Union. Simply, the preferences of Franco-British couple were not assessed high enough for them to openly confront its powerful German partner. The Yugoslav crisis was very important for Europe because it actually meant a change in the balance of power in Europe. After the Yugoslav crisis, France and

¹⁶Held on 23 February 1991.

the UK had to recognize that the re-united Germany is once again a powerful factor in Europe whose voice cannot be ignored.

3. The policy of EU towards Macedonia during the Yugoslav crisis

In order to present the politics and relations of the EU towards Macedonia, firstly we must look at the behavior of Macedonia during the Yugoslav crisis. Looking back Macedonia was not one of the leader republics of the dissolution process of Yugoslavia. Rather, it could be concluded that largely it was exactly the opposite. Some Macedonian politicians even made efforts together with politicians from the other republics to find a mutually acceptable solution and to rescue the common state. Such example was the Izetbegovic – Gligorov platform¹⁷ which was not accepted by the other republics. So, in a situation where Macedonia could not have been qualified as “secessionist” republic, it could not have been subjected of significant diplomatic activities by the EU. This was the case because just before the declaration of independence by both northern Yugoslav republics, the Union had built a common position which consisted of condemnation and disapproval of any kind of unilateral declaration of independence of any republic¹⁸, but also condemnation and disapproval of eventual use of force to retain the wholeness of Yugoslavia¹⁹. Simply, the general position of the EU was to support the survival of Yugoslavia. Logically, subject of diplomatic action by the EU were the republics that opted for dissolution of Yugoslavia. In accordance with the general tendency of Macedonia to help the federation survive, the main activity of the EU in this initial period, was not directed towards Macedonia, but primarily towards the pro-dissolution of Slovenia and Croatia on one hand and towards the federal and pro-centralistic positioned Belgrade and the YNA which threatened to use force to preserve the federation on the other hand.

Where was the Republic of Macedonia in all this? Before the Conference for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague, Macedonia already applied to the Union as a separate country (though still part of the Federation) with a memorandum entitled “The international position of Macedonia and its status in the Yugoslav community.” In this memorandum Macedonia expressed its views and stood for survival of Yugoslavia as a union of sovereign states with some federal elements. The memorandum also mentioned the “European processes”; *“The disintegration of the economic and the political system of Yugoslavia in the shape that has existed up till now, faces with the necessity of fundamental reconstruction of the state. This process of reorganizing of relations among the Yugoslav republics should correspond with the European processes. This means respect for the independent and sovereign position of each state as a precondition for higher forms of integration.”*²⁰ If analyzing the positions of Macedonia

¹⁷ Presented on 06 March 1991.

¹⁸ This position was primarily a message to Slovenia and Croatia.

¹⁹ This position was primarily a message to Belgrade and YNA.

²⁰ Denko Maleski, “The Dissociation from Yugoslavia, the First Steps of the Independent Macedonian State,” in *The Macedonian Foreign Policy 1991-2006*, ed. Dimitar Mirčev (Skopje: Az-Buki, 2006), 26-30. P 26.

expressed in the Memorandum, it will be noticed that they are practically the same solutions that later the EU offered at the Hague Conference. The Memorandum itself is very significant for Macedonia, because the Republic referred directly to the EU as a separate country not as a part of the federation; consequently it imposed itself as participant and as a stricken party that cannot be ignored in future decisions and projections about Yugoslavia.

After the outbreak of the military conflict in Croatia EU understood that the problem has not been solved at all and appointed a mediator to work on solving the Yugoslav problem. This is due to at least two facts. First, USA gave the “main player” role to the EU and second the EU was not the same any more after Maastricht. One of the main changes made with this treaty was the introduction of the Unions pillar system. According to this, one of the three pillars was the European Common Foreign and Security policy - CFSP²¹. Unlike the first pillar²², in the second (CFSP) pillar and in the third pillar²³ the principle of Supranationalism was replaced with the principle of Inter-governmentalism. The reason for this is the fact that the issues treated outside the first pillar, were much more sensitive for the member states in a terms of their sovereignty.²⁴ First special appointed mediator was Lord Carrington and later Lord Owen. During its dealing with the Yugoslav problem EU organized series of conferences in The Hague²⁵ and together with the UN was the organizer of the London Conference²⁶ and the Geneva Conference²⁷. *“The EC peace Conference was, in theory, exactly what Yugoslavia needed, since it aimed to consider the country as a whole and to develop a coordinated approach to all the region’s conflicts rather than merely deal with immediate flash-points, such as that in Croatia, in isolation. (...) while the conditions in Bosnia - Herzegovina and Macedonia was supposed to be as much part of the agenda as those in Slovenia and Croatia.”*²⁸. The goal of this peace conference was to find a solution for the ongoing war in Croatia and a comprehensive solution for other conflicts in Yugoslavia. All the Yugoslav republics were represented. Thanks to this new EU approach, Macedonia officially became part of the common policy of the EU agenda and the situation in Macedonia rose to the level of equal importance with the situation in Croatia, which was at war at that time.

Why was this so important for the Republic of Macedonia? The answer is, because through The Hague Conference, for the first time in history Macedonia took part at an international

²¹The historical origin of CFSP was the European Political Cooperation (EPC) introduced by the Single European Act from 1986.

²² European Communities .

²³ Justice and Home Affairs.

²⁴ Because of this, the decision methods in the second and the third pillar, in the most of the cases, require unanimity among the member states. CFSP was necessary, among others, to improve the perception of EU not only as an economic giant but also as a political pygmy. So, if the EU wants to be a global player, the logical way of thinking is that the EU must be player and main manager in its own yard.

²⁵ September 1991

²⁶ August 1992

²⁷ September 1993

²⁸ Christopher Bennett, *Yugoslav bloody collapse. Causes, Course and Consequences* (New York: University Press Washington Square, 1995). P 176.

conference presented by its own representatives and became an equal participant. This international conference discussed, among other current issues, the future of Macedonia. This is certainly the beginning of an independent Macedonian foreign policy. The Macedonian representatives at this conference were Kiro Gligorov, Denko Malevski as Minister of Foreign Relations, and Vasil Tupurkovski as member of the Presidency of Yugoslavia²⁹. They were sitting side by side with their colleagues from Serbia- Milosevic, Croatia –Tudjman, B&H - Izetbegovic, Slovenia – Kucan, Montenegro- Bulatovic. The Macedonian representative Kiro Gligorov had a speech at the Conference and presented his views according to which, Macedonia believed that despite all the difficulties the existence of Yugoslavia was still possible in a new form but on the principle of affirmation of the sovereignty of the republics. Furthermore, the concerns of the international community and especially the EU were legitimate and justified; there was need for cessation of all military actions as precondition for negotiations; the republics needed mutual recognitions as a basis for equality in the future status of the Yugoslav community and last but not least, Macedonia was committed to good neighborly relations and had willingness to play a role of an active factor of peace and stability in the Balkans.

However, if a real critical review of The Hague Conference is done, it could be find out that although originally it had a working agenda that treats Yugoslavia as a whole and all the problems in the republics as equal, in reality it appeared to be mediating in finding a solution between the big republics, Serbia and Croatia. This can be also confirmed with the following interview given by Lord Carrington “*We decided to see people who actually mean something, the Presidents Milosevic and Tudjman and we set them on the table and began to talk to them.*”³⁰. It can be concluded that this picture has been repeated more or less on all future conferences organized by the EU and with the time, the primacy of the agenda was mainly concentrated on B&H, as well as on the main actors, Croatia and Serbia, while all the other republics were more or less, only formally part of the agenda. Just for illustration on the London Conference³¹ although there were Macedonian representatives the Macedonian question was not treated at all.”*Before we began with the regular work with determination of the agenda, I asked the Conference to consider the issue of the Macedonian recognition. But unfortunately the issue did not come into agenda.*”³²

The Hague Conference is important for Macedonia namely because of the decision to organize this kind of peace conference on a meeting held on 27 August 1991 on which it was decided to establish the Arbitration Committee. The Committee has been established to help by providing legal opinions to the work of The Hague Peace Conference. Thus, these opinions would have strong influence on the policy of the Union towards Yugoslavia, i.e. Macedonia respectively. The head of the Commission was Robert Badinter, a famous lawyer and Chairman of the

²⁹ Киро Глигоров, *Македонија е се што имаме* (Скопје: издавачки центар три, 2001).

³⁰ British Broadcasting Corporation Documentary., *The Death of Yugoslavia - Enter Nationalism, Wars of Independence, Road To War, Gates of Hell, Safe Area(1995)*.

³¹In which Macedonia was presented by President Gligorov, ministers Maleski, Frckovski and Vice President of the Parliament Dzheljadin Murati.

³² Киро Глигоров, *Македонија е се што имаме* (Скопје: издавачки центар три, 2001).

Constitutional Court of France. The Commission was composed by legal experts. Its members were the presidents of constitutional courts in Belgium, Germany, Italy and Spain³³. Regarding the opinions of the Commission, there were some discussions in terms of their weight. Although foreign ministers of the EU initially agreed that they should be legally binding, normally for the parties that would accept its jurisdiction, later they were only treated as advisory. The reasons for this reduction of the importance of the Commission positions are given by the authors Lukic&Lynch (1996)³⁴ according to whom, this was done in order not to allow legal opinions in advance to prevent any political agreements. This implicated that virtually anything can be negotiated. In this particular case we can say that the law was subordinate to the politics. However, the Badinter Commission was composed of leading experts in law who came from different EU countries in order to be neutral and to build their views based on purely legal and not political grounds.

The commission was summoned to give its opinion about the legal consequences of the dissolution of Yugoslavia on 15 specific questions. We will make a brief analysis of some of these opinions that we think were relevant for the creation of the EU policy towards Macedonia. The first question on which the Badinter Commission gave its opinion was asked personally by the Lord Carrington and was a question with paramount importance about whether Yugoslavia should disintegrate. Serbia and Montenegro believed that all those republics that have decided to become independent (including Macedonia) should be considered as secessionist ones and that SFRJ should continue to exist with the republics that would decide to stay (at least Serbia and Montenegro). On the other hand, all the other republics (including Macedonia) and above all Slovenia and Croatia, thought that this is not a secession process but a disintegration process in accordance with the will of the founding republics and therefore all these six republics are equal successors to the former federation in a way that none of them alone can claim to be sole heir of the former federation. The opinions of the Commission took the position of the second view and concluded that Yugoslavia was in the process of dissolution. On 4 July 1992 the Commission concluded that the process of dissolution of Yugoslavia had been finished and that SFRJ no longer existed. Also according to the legal interpretation of the Badinter Commission all former republics are legal successors of the former Yugoslavia. The outcome of this opinion was favorable for Macedonia as well. According to the opinion all the republics that declared independence, cannot be considered as secession states created by cutting a territory from a previous state, but as successor states of former Yugoslavia with all rights and obligations arising from it.

Besides the first one, particularly interesting is also the second opinion, although it does not have direct importance for Macedonia. It was a question asked by Serbia regarding the rights of the Serbian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia as constituent nations of Yugoslavia, specifically in relation to the right of self-determination. The opinion of the Commission

³³Irene Petry, Roman Herzog, Aldo Corasaniti and Francisco Tomás Valiente respectively.

³⁴ Reneo Lukic and Allen Lznch, *Europe from the balkans to the Urals, The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

practically consisted of two important elements. The first one was that the Serbs in Croatia and B&H are entitled to have political and cultural autonomy within Croatia and B&H, and the second one was that they do not have the right to establish a new state or join other countries on their own will.

The third opinion was given as a response to a question asked again by Serbia. The question demanded clarification and interpretation of the dispute between the republics about the former internal - administrative borders between the republics, specifically between Croatia and Serbia, B&H and Serbia i.e. whether they are borders in terms of international law or not. The opinion of the Commission was to confirm or deny the Serbian-Montenegrin claim that these former Republic borders had a purely administrative character and accordingly they cannot automatically become international and interstate borders. Although this question does not directly mention Republic of Macedonia, it was still of great interest for the country. The legal basis that can be used as an argument for the former administrative republic borders between Serbia and Macedonia depended directly on the legal interpretation about the former internal republican borders by the Commission. The response of the Commission may be interpreted as positive for Croatia, B&H and Macedonia. Especially important for Macedonia was the interpretation of the Commission that³⁵ the borders between Croatia and Serbia, B&H and Serbia and between other possible adjacent independent states may not be altered except by agreement between them and that according to established principles of international law amending the external borders by force cannot produce any legal effects. This was positive for Macedonia because it emphasized the principle that no one is allowed to use force to alter borders and even if this happens it cannot be legally recognized.

Particularly interesting for comparison is the opinion No.5 given by the Commission regarding the request for recognition of the independence of Croatia by the EU. The Commission³⁶ reserved the current recognition of Croatia's independence, believing that Croatia must first improve the minority rights through legal amendment of its own legislation.

The most important opinion of the Badinter Commission which directly concerns Macedonia was the opinion No. 6, in which the application for recognition of Macedonia has been reviewed to find out whether the country fulfils the conditions set by the EU in order to become a recognized independent republic. Interesting to note is that besides examining the necessary conditions for recognition, which were also valid for the other republics, in the case of Macedonia another supplementary question has been considered too. The Commission also examined the Greek government statement according to which the use of the name "Macedonia" as a name for the country, would mean irredentism towards Greece. According to the opinion of the Commission, there was no obstacle to the recognition of Macedonia's independence, i.e. Macedonia fulfilled all necessary conditions for this. Actually, the Commission implicitly

³⁵ Reneo Lukic and Allen Lznch, *Europe from the balkans to the Urals, The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

³⁶ On 11 January 1992.

rejected the Greek government claims that using the word “Macedonia” implied irredentism to Greece.

The commission was created with the task to provide legal opinions on the Hague Peace Conference organized by the EU. So, any Commission opinion had a great legal weight and logically it should be taken into consideration during the building of common foreign policy of the EU. However, if we make a comparison between the content of the legal opinions No.5 and No.6 and their real effect through the conduct of the Union, we can conclude that the EU acted quite contrary to what was the opinion of the committee that itself created. Why is this comparison needed? Because through this comparison it can be seen the approach of the EU towards the Yugoslav issue and accordingly we can infer the policy of the EU towards Macedonia. The previous conclusion reveals one thing. The approach of the EU was primarily a political and the international law was on second place. Thus, because of the individual interests of the member countries (mainly Germany) Croatia was given the recognition (for which the Commission³⁷ had expressed reserves in terms of meeting the requirements for its recognition) and at the same time the recognition of the independence of Macedonia was postponed (although the Commission³⁸ confirmed adamantly that Macedonia fulfilled all conditions set by the EU for its recognition) because of the opposition by the Greek government (whose arguments the Commission had already declared as not relevant). The reason for this political decision by the EU consisted of various interests of its different member states. While the republics of Slovenia and Croatia had their own strong supporter in the EU member states expressed primarily in the face of powerful Germany, the Republic of Macedonia not only that did not have a strong supporter within the Union, but it had quite the opposite of that in the face of its first neighbor country Greece, both EU and NATO member. According to Lukic & Lynch³⁹ the German government decided to recognize the independence of Croatia and Slovenia on 19 December 1991. However because of consideration for the sensibility of its partners, the recognition was not implemented until 15 January 1992, date when 12 member states of the EU agreed with it. The previous reveals Germany's position as a strong supporter of Slovenia and Croatia, which not only lobbies but also puts pressure on the other members to recognize their independence. Lobbying by a powerful state as Germany certainly gave results. In contrast, Macedonia remained unrecognized for a longer period, despite the positive opinion given by the Commission, i.e. by Europe's top legal experts. The harsh reality Macedonia felt already on the EU summit held on 15 January 1992, when the member states of the Union decided to recognize the independence of Slovenia and Croatia, but not the independence of Macedonia.

In terms of policy of the EU towards Macedonia we can notice one other matter; EU did not treat the name issue as a real issue and as a potential significant problem. At the same time, the denial of the name by neighboring Greece turned into one of the top priorities in its foreign policy and Greece used all the possible mechanisms in all international organizations whose member it is

³⁷ Opinion No.5

³⁸ Opinion No.6

³⁹ Reneo Lukic and Allen Lznch, *Europe from the balkans to the Urals, The disintegration of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

(including EU) to resolve this issue according to its own national interest. Thus, immediately after the positive opinion about the recognition of the independence of Macedonia given by the Badinter Commission, on the very next EU summit⁴⁰ the name issue was for the first time officially raised by Greece “*Immediately after EC meeting recognizing the independence of Slovenia and Croatia, G. de Mikelis, on 15 January, stated at a press conference in Rome that the matter (the recognition of Macedonia) was only postponed for a short time to clarify some Greek reservations, but that it would need no more than a few weeks to find a solution. The issue of the name for him was not a real issue, nor had the EU made it a precondition for recognition.*”⁴¹. According to Mirchev, minimizing the significance of the name issue was an integral part of the original policy of the Union towards Macedonia. At the EU summit held in Lisbon on 27 June 1992 there was a full victory of the Greek diplomacy as the EU concluded that they would recognize the Republic of Macedonia as an independent state only if it rejects the word “Macedonia” from its name. In this way the problem, which according to the original terminology used by EU officials was neither a problem nor a precondition for recognition of the republic, now officially became both.

With the action of the EU towards Yugoslavia, i.e. Macedonia, a certain contradiction can be noticed between the desired objectives of the Union and the acts it made in reality. Macedonia stepped out of Yugoslavia in a fully legitimate and peaceful way through the use of exclusively democratic means, not by going into any military conflict with the YNA. It signed an agreement with YNA for YNA’s peaceful departure from the country. With all these facts we can conclude that Macedonia was the only republic which left the federation in a peaceful and democratic way. According to Mahncke, Ambos & Reynolds⁴² Macedonia was the only country which was not directly involved in the crises and wars in the 90’s. For a long time, Macedonia has been recognized as a kind of oasis of peace in the region.

Because of this, the attitude of the EU towards Macedonia can be characterized as surprising. Namely, one of the Union’s main objectives concerning the Yugoslav issue was to prevent further spread of the fire. According to that, the Union decided to recognize Slovenia, Croatia and B&H, in order to prevent the aggressive ambitions of Serbia. So, in accordance with the objectives of the EU and in accordance with the positive opinion of the Commission established by the EU, the Union was expected to support this peaceful approach of Macedonia. By delaying the recognition, EU practically created an unrecognized territory, a part of the former federation that did not even have an army.⁴³ “*The name dispute, because of which the EC member Greece blocs the recognition of a small country by the Community, out of a Balkan mini comedy will actually become a national populist drama.*” This could easily be interpreted by the neighbors of Macedonia as a message of the great powers that the territory of Macedonia can be recomposed.

⁴⁰ 15 January 1992.

⁴¹ Димитар Мирчев, *Македонската надворешна политика* (Скопје: Аз-буки, 2006).

⁴² Dieter Mahncke, Alicia Ambos and Christopher Reynolds, *European foreign policy: from rhetoric to reality?* (Brussels: Presses Inter universitaires Europeennes, 2004).

⁴³ That was commented in the German newspaper “Die Zeit” from Hamburg (quoted by Nova Makedonija 27 December 1992).

*“In February 1992, the Greek prime minister called for meeting of all leaders of Greece, Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia (which at that time still belonged to former Yugoslavia and was not a sovereign state). Bulgaria did not agree on holding this ‘mini-Balkans-Summit’, and other international powers intervened, so the meeting was canceled.”*⁴⁴. The question here is, why the EU (with its policy) allowed anybody to interpret in this way its policy and why EU allowed somebody to heat the passions for a possible new military conflict, this time on the territory of Macedonia, which could easily include countries outside of the former Yugoslav federation. One explanation is offered by Mirchev *“In practice, it showed that the international community, in spite of its understanding and positive attitude, does not dispose of any mechanisms in order to positively work out this question for Macedonia.”* He continues: *“In this sense, the example of Macedonia is a small part of the mosaic of new and controversial realities in the world and European order.”* We agree with this position which suggests that it is more likely that there was a lack of appropriate mechanisms in the Post-Cold War Europe, through which EU would have achieved its own goals, rather than the Union deliberately would practice such a dubious policy. Because of the Greek reserves, shown in relation with the right of one of the successor republics from former Yugoslavia to continue to use the name Macedonia, now as an independent state, the process of recognition of the country was postponed and additionally complicated. According to Mahncke, Ambos & Reynolds (2004) the national interest meant a lot more than a coherent European action, as in the case of the rapid German recognition of Slovenia and Croatia 1991 despite the disagreements with partners from the EU. One of the reasons was the unanimity rule in the decision making process within the EU. According to this system, each member state has the right to veto any important decision concerning the EU’s foreign policy. However this was not the only reason. Another example was the Greek economic embargo⁴⁵, when Greece unilaterally closed the border with Macedonia. The Greek border was in the same time the EU border, so the Greek trade embargo to Macedonia meant also that the EU has a trade embargo to Macedonia. The Commission reacted and asked the European Court of Justice to bring the case of the possible violation of the Maastricht treaty⁴⁶. However just before the Court gave its verdict, the Commission suddenly withdrew the lawsuit. This example clearly shows that the problem was not only in the CFSP limitations mostly because of the unanimity rule. Namely, the example above was legally part of the first pillar in which the supranational decision making prevails. Therefore what can be suggested is that the principle of solidarity between member states was implemented in this case (through the EU institutions). This kind of situation had influence on CFSP in general and on Macedonia as well.

Interesting question here is why the other powerful EU members such as France were so indifferent to this pertinent issue? Simply, France did not have enough interest to confront with its ally - Greece (in the case of Macedonia) and even less to confront with Germany (case Croatia).. Only for illustration we give the following quote *“(...) the French government did not*

⁴⁴ Димитар Мирчев, *Македонската надворешна политика* (Скопје: Аз-буки, 2006).

⁴⁵ In February 1994.

⁴⁶ Article 225 – taking unilateral measures against the Community law.

give way to pressure over the recognition of Macedonia, despite the strong attention of the media on this issue."⁴⁷. Despite the existence of the relatively pro-Macedonian mood in the French public, the government decided not to confront with Greece for the simple reason of not having interest to do it.

Although Greece successfully managed to channelize its positions in the official positions of the Union, within the EU there were other opinions as well. According to Gallagher⁴⁸ the internal tensions within the Union were publicly shown on 20 January 1993 by the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs Uffe Ellemann-Jensen which has attracted the attention of Greek members of the European Parliament when he characterized the Greek position as "ridiculous" and expressed hope that the Security Council would very soon recognize Macedonia and that many of the Member States of the Communities would support this. Nevertheless, they was a strong support for the young independent republic and a stimulus for the country to continue fighting for the establishment of better relations with the EU.

Some authors⁴⁹ consider that the EU was quite active in acting preventively in Macedonia since the beginning of the Yugoslav crisis. Regarding the role of the EU, they note two important actions: firstly the establishment of the monitoring mission in 1991 with the task to report on the political and economic progress, secondly, the establishment of the Badinter Commission established as a legal advisory by the EU. Due to these two elements, they argue that the Union was quite active and acted preventively in Macedonia. We do not fully agree with this claim. Especially because the authors emphasize the importance of the Badinter commission but in the same time ignore its results. However in the later years the EU dedicated to put much more attention on Macedonia and was one of the main factors for the stability in the country especially during the conflict in 2001. Macedonia was the first country from the WB that has signed the Association and Stabilizations Agreement⁵⁰. Macedonia was the place where the EU sent its first policy mission⁵¹. Macedonia has obtained official status of EU candidate country⁵² and the Commission is constantly giving its opinions about the Macedonian progress in the fulfilling of the Copenhagen criteria. Apart of the good mutually relations between Macedonia and the EU the same problems still prevail even today 20 years after the dissolution of the old country.

⁴⁷ Sonia Lucarelli, *Europe and the Breakup of Yugoslavia. A political failure of a scholarly explanation* (Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2000).

⁴⁸ Tom Gallagher, *The Balkans after the Cold War: From Tyranny to Tragedy* (London: Routledge, 2003).

⁴⁹ Dieter Mahncke, Alicia Ambos and Christopher Reynolds, *European foreign policy: from rhetoric to reality?*. (Brussels: Presses Inter universitaires Europeennes, 2004).

⁵⁰ April 2001

⁵¹ EUFOR Concordia, March 2003- December 2003.

⁵² March.2004

4. Conclusion

The disintegration of Yugoslavia took place in the period after the end of the Cold War. That was a period of pre-adaptation and redefining of the priorities of the foreign policies of the European countries. EU itself was in a similar process. In this context, EU launched ambitious projects like the Common Foreign and Security Policy, which was supposed to promote, at this time still, the Economic Union as an international global player. However the way of the EU for dealing with the crisis, which was in its own backyard –Yugoslavia was unsuccessful start for the Common Foreign and Security Policy. In reality priority was given to the individual national policies of the member-states vs. the common EU foreign policy's interests. After the Yugoslav crisis Germany came back to the most powerful European family together with France and the UK. On the other hand these developments had their impact on Macedonia as a former member of the Yugoslav Federation. The dissolution of Yugoslavia was a basis for foundation of the Macedonian independent state, and accordingly for the formation of the country's foreign policy. The first step was made through the transmitted Memorandum by Macedonia directly (not through the Federation) to the EU and by sending its own representatives to the Hague Conference. In this way for the first time in Macedonian history, the Macedonians had their own representatives at an international conference, where it was discussed about the future of the country. However, the relations between Macedonia and the EU despite the expectations did not go smoothly. Namely, although Macedonia "played" according to European rules, it still remained unrecognized by the EU member states. Moreover the country had direct opposition for its recognition in the face of its southern neighbor and member of the EU – Greece. These factors, combined with the still incoherent international and European conditions and mechanisms of this period contributed to complications in the relations between the EU and Macedonia in a way that is creating problems in their contemporary relations as well.

Dejan Marolov is currently doing his PhD studies at Ss Cyril and Methodius University, Law faculty, Institute for international law and international relations. He has also a Master Degree in Advanced European & International Studies from the Institut Européen des Hautes Etudes Internationales (IEHEI). He is also currently working as assistant at the Law Faculty – "Goce Delcev,, University in Macedonia.

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